[redacted]

Must Remain in
Transcription Room

Mr N : So, in the first place I want to mention something--part of it I mentioned already last Friday, but of course everybody was not there--It concerns you as a group, Group Two, and it concerns also, primarily Group One. It is the necessity of realizing that we live in a certain neighborhood, and that when there is a gathering of people it draws attention maybe to the neighbors--some people may like it or not like it--and because of that we are under an obligation. So, there will be some rules and I would like you to adhere to them strictly. In the first place there is not going to be a collection of money at the door any longer; theoretically it shouldn't affect you because, as you know, the rule is that you pay in advance, before the first of the following month. I know that you haven't adhered to that; You also know that I suggested that anyone who could not would write me and give reasons why not. Such letters have been just one or two, not more. That is not right. I suggest this and I mean it, and I will become as time goes on stricter and stricter for your own sake. So when I make that kind of suggestion, it is like an order, and I will adhere to it; and I will tell you exactly that those people who don't do it cannot come to Monday. Monday also is regular attendance. I don't like people to treat it--we are now past the holidays, so there's no particular reason why you cannot come; if you cannot come for some reason, you have to have the politeness to let me know or to let the secretary know, that we don't wait for you. But on the other hand, there won't be any waiting, because the door will close at eight and we will not allow anyone else to come in. By this time you must know how long it takes you to get here, allowing for traffic and all the rest.

Eight o'clock is not too early to interfere with your dinner. And surely between your professional finishing time and getting here by eight, I think the time is ample. (the doorbell rings) We will not answer this. So that is the rule now, and if the door is locked, it is just too bad. Now, I want you to make quite sure that you understand the reason why I do this, because it is more involved than just that, that this that you follow certain instructions, and that you're willing to follow them because you know they're for the general good, not just to please me. Whenever a person cannot pay for Monday on a monthly basis, I have to know it. And if I give absolution, that is, freedom for you--and I can understand conditions well enough, that people are sometimes poor, they don't have this or that, or they work on a different kind of a basis, whatever it may be--that freedom only applies for one month, and the following month you have to ask me again. Now let that be understood. Furthermore on Monday we talk about work. I will expect people to be able to tell something about work when they apply it. And if you cannot make it regularly, and it is not because there are too many people, you cannot all talk on one evening, every once in a while I have to hear from everybody regarding what they are doing, how they apply work. It does not help you at all to just sit and soak it in like a sponge. Wednesday is all right for that; I don't mind it. Monday we work; Tuesday we work even more but differently, and there is still a gap between Monday and Tuesday. So, this applies to you now. Whatever you want to do and to whatever extent you want to follow these instructions, it's all right with me. If you decide yes, fine; if you decide no, alos, very good; at least you can make up your mind. Now this same kind of thing, of being affected by a group of detec-

tives who are interested in finding out what we are doing, and those who were here last Tuesday, remember the little interruptions we had? For that reason the appearance of you, as you are, has to be considered. It is not right to come any old way in this group. I want you to be respectful so that you can be respected. I want you to be sure that you look correct and not like a beatnik, I use that word advisedly because you know what I mean by it. Your appearance has to be such that you are not afraid or ashamed of yourself if you happened to meet Gurdjieff. This means also that when you come, you come right in, and don't stand and wait for someone else outside; and the same applies when the meeting is over. You go home and you disperse. I don't want a conglomeration of people in front of the door. If you have to wait for a car, then wait somewhere else, on a street corner, or in a coffee shop, but not in front. Avoid all resemblance of evil; even if evil isn't there, I just don't want any kind of inquiry, legitimate as it may be; and legitmate as we are, I just don't want to have to explain certain things if we can avoid it. So this again, and I will probably repeat it time and time again because I'm sure you will forget; this is now the instruction, and you must remember it, because because of your conduct, I will be the judge. And it has nothing to do with fashion; it has to do with respect, respect for Gurdjieff, respect for the ideas, respect for yourselves, and perhaps not the least, respect for me. I say respect for yourself--I simply mean that we are talking about something that is important in your life, or at least, should be; it is not just a case of a nice little cocktail party where you happen to discuss a little bit about Gurdjieff. We mean work on yourself, and we mean by that

a certain serious, honest attitude of wanting to do something for your own growth, and hoping that as a result of that, you will be able to--use simply the term evelve--to develope, really to extract something for yourself from it regarding your inner life, your spiritual life, and that kind of life with which you, which ultimately of course is the most important part. It has nothing to do emen, you might say, with living on earth, but only that you learn how to live on earth. There's an additional thing I want to mention because sometimes it happens to be that people are struck by some ideas, and I do not object that some of them and some of you may want to take notes; it is quite all right if it is for yourself, but let it be quite understood, I don't want anything of this kind of material that we talk about, and particularly when it has to do with tasks, or certain ways of how to work, I don't want it published. I don't want even to have it discussed; I don't want it to be used in order to put yourself on a certain standpoint as being admired because you know a little bit; nothing of that kind is allowed. Naturally no publications whatsoever; if any of this ever gets in where you're willing to have it published, I will have to pass on it as long as I'm alive. What happens after I die I don't know, and I hope that by that time your conscience will be enough of a guide for you to know what would be permissible or not. But I do not wish in any event and by no means whatsoever to have the name of Gurdjieff or the validity of the ideas dragged to a lower level than where they belong; they belong to a level which represents for me, and should represent for you a certain distance even away from earth, and they should not even be touched by the ordinary affairs of earth, and only if the earth, that is your daily

life might require application of such ideas, that that application is your own and it is not anyone else's and it is not the property of anyone else. It is still the property that belongs to the truth as it has been formulated by Gurdjieff for us. It does not mean that it is the truth which has not been formulated before by some other people--it is quite possible--but at the present time we are only interested in what has come to us through Gurdjieff and ALL AND EVERYTHING. So again I want to emphasize that your conscience has to be quite clear about that. And I hope that by the time I die, there will be something of real loyalty, understanding, and, I might say, integrity existing on your own part. This has reference also to certain things which, as you know, I'm working on, trying to wrote a little bit of this and that, put it together in some form that will be published, that is, published only privately; it is only meant for distribution among people of a group, and in that respect I again have to trust you. When the first part of FIREFLY was so-called made available, I put a page in there in the beginning, and those who have seen a copy of it will remember that I didn't allow anything to go out, that it only was meant for yourselves, and it couldn't even be shown to someone unless it had my permission. The same thing will apply to anything that I will ever publish and even more so, because what I want to write about this time has to do with work; it is not in general, but it has a very definite application of how to understand what we are talking about on Monday and Tuesday and how work could fit in and how it could become beneficial for someone who is really interested. So you see these notes, or that kind of material, if it ever gets into your hands, you have an obligation with it, and that obligation I will hold you to, you have to adhere to it. The mistakes that have

been made regarding such things in the past, and by perhaps well-meaning people, I mention for instance only one person like Nicoll, writing five volumes of commentaries and so forth on Ouspensky and Gurdjieff, I think have been and are still, very delterious, because that was the kind of material belonging to his group and it should have stayed within his group, and then perhaps the members of that group could understand what he meant; but as it is at the present time, it is misleading in many different ways, and it throws a person off balance, and even if they think that that is so-called gospel truth, I'm afraid they are getting away far too far even from the possibility of ever understanding it. That is why, as you know, I've advised not to read it for anyone who is just about starting to learn a little bit. There are many things already in existence about Gurdjieff and some people, for whatever reasons they may have chosen that they want to publish or write something, or that it was a nice kind of a subject which perhaps might give them a little honor, or maybe some money--I'm not one of them. I'm not interested in it one way or the other; I'm only interested in making available something that I believe does not exist at the present time. And much of the material that has been published was not original even with the people who wrote it, but it came from something and then they use themselves as a channel, and also misused it, and sometimes used material that didn't belong to them. And many times that which they wrote was very personally colored because they only knew a little phase of Gurdjieff and were in contact with him only for a couple of years. Well, you might say it was sad; at the same time there is also an advantage for some people that at least there is something in existence about Gurdjieff, and in a general way, it's all right. But for me, it is not really as yet the kind of

thing that can help a person who is interested in working and to find out how they should work, and perhaps they cannot always get that kind of information from a book or from reading. It is to help such people, so you see I'm not excluding now that there may be someone somewhere for whom this kind of material may be useful, but then when it is given to such a person, I would almost say as long as I am alive, I want to make sure that I know about it. You are under strict obligations regarding that, and what I now say, whatever I want to write about, it applies to that, and it applies in exactly the same way to anything we discuss. That which we discuss is material for you, for your growth, for your health, for your understanding, in order to satisfy in you a wish to work, and reversely, you are not entitled to it when you don't work, or at least, when you don't make attempts, and when this starts to apply already much more on a Monday, on Group Two than on Group Three, that is, when you listen and don't use it, and don't make an honest effort, you commit a sin; you are in the presence of something that is sacred, it should be sacred for you, because it has to do with something that might give you the opportunity for further growth, and it becomes sinful when it is not used, when it is misused, and when it doesn't lead to that which you aim at, which is to be able to understand conditions of earth, and to be able to develope something which is, I call it again, Not earthly, that is, it has a certain quality of a different kind of nature which belongs to a higher region, and there is no use fooling with a higher force. So an obligation that you have when you come to listen and you do not apply, I think you are not honest. It has nothing to do, you must understand that, with the ability to do; you see, not many people will know perhaps what to do with work, but they do make an attempt and there may be some who after making several attempts, may not

be able to continue because they get harassed or confused; at the same time their attitude toward it can be quite truthful, and even because of that they might remain interested, because they may have hope that some day they will understand. But you see, all this implies integrity regarding yourself and your conscience. And I'm talking about that; I'm talking about your ability to become a man; and that that which you wish as man requires a certain principle that is going to become a trait of your character, that you could become interested in work for the sake of your self, to develope that--and I call it again, sacred--it is not of this earth. So with these understandings, and these ideas, and these suggestions now, which I hope are clear to you and I've tried to put them in a very simple form, I also want to assure you that I really mean it, and I will try from my side to adhere to the same kind of things, and I am as much as you are, under the same kind of obligation, and it is my conscience also that tells me to tell you. So now what is it that you want to know about work?

Q-M I had a task given me four weeks ago, walking, looking at my feet, then looking up and walking, and then trying to relax my face muscles and walking another block, and repeating that. The first week I seemed to be getting results; there was definitely friction there; the second week, I don't know, for some reason I slacked off; something about it...maybe it just upset me emotionally, and I slacked off. Then I spoke to you and I asked you what to do and you said continue, so I continued for a third week. Towards the end of the third week I found out that there wasn't as much friction as there was earlier, and I had intended to ask you then for another task--that was over a week ago and I didn't get the chance--and the

task I had seemed to dry out, so to speak.

Mr N How is it now? Still dry?

Q-A Yes sir.

Mr N You could not revive it?

Q-A I could, but I must have some block against it, that it's already dried.

Mr N Yes, but when something is dry you can wet it and dissolve it again.

Q-A I don't know.

Mr N You don't know? If you make up your mind that you are going to really do it right on a certain day in the morning, why couldn't you revive it?

Q-A I don't know, I started feeling that it was getting routine.

Mr N That may be, but at the same time, what do you do the task for ?

Q-A To wake up.

Mr N If there is a wish to wake up, wouldn't that revive any kind of task?

Q-A I suppose it would.

Mr N I'm sure it would; it depends upon how strong the wish is. The wish is there?

Q-A I have a very strong wish to do something.

Mr N That's right. I suggest you do it agin for another week, exactly because you know that it might run dry, and that it is already a little familiar with you, and now you see what you can do with all that against you, and when it again runs a chance of running dry, you remember why you want to do it. There are two different things; one is the realization of the state in which one is, in which you want to work; the other is how that particular wish becomes manifest.

If there is a real realization of wanting to work, and if that realization is based on the hope that one will be able to grow, or that there is something that is not right, and you see it in yourself, that you want to overcome it, and whatever else may be a motivation for work, when that is strong enough you can enliven any kind of a task. But if you stop at the point when it runs dry, then you forget the other side, that really the reason is that you don't have enough wish.

Q-A Well, it did work the third week after I had slacked off.

Mr M Yes, that is why it will work now, particularly since you have talked about it. All right, you try it agin. For one week; let me know next week. All right.

Q-B Right after you came back, I spoke to you in the meeting that I understood some things that I hadn't understood before, that I understood that I now wanted to do things, to make efforts of any kind, regardless of any particular end, in other words, that the means was now important, and that the end was irrelevant; that I now understood faith with a capitol F, in a religious sense, or also, which is the same, in an ethical sense. The novelty of it has left, but the emotional part, the emotional understanding has not left. I still remain changed as I was as a result of that understanding. I now have one week between semesters; the great pressure that was on me before is now off. I would like to use this time to use my new understanding, if you would consider that I do have some kind of new understanding, in order to make a very serious attempt. I shall be looking, I'll be spending this week with my wife who is also on vacation, for an apartment in Manhattan, and I want to know how to tie all this up and make a serious attempt. I've made a number of

attempts, but I'd like this to be more serious.

Mr N Can you plan a day early in the morning? Can you plan it the evening before? If you make a plan do you think you could adhere to it? Do you know in general what you have to do in looking for apartments?

Q-B In general, but I'm horribly absent-minded and I forget about details.

Mr N But if the evening before when you think about it, can you write it up?

Q-B Yes, I carry a Things-to-do-today book.

Mr N How detailed can you get and make assurance for yourself that you will follow it up?

Q-B In regards to work, I can get rather detailed. In regards to Looking for an apartment I have to go where the ads and the suggestions carry me.

Mr N Yes, well let's say you look at ten or five or whatever it may be, without defining it, but you are going to do it with your wife. And you think about how you are going to go into an apartment; you will have to see the superintendent or the renting agent or someone, you know; there will be a certain habitual way, almost, of looking for an apartment which will be stereotyped for each one, even if it's a different apartment, your attitude will be very much the same. It will be well, very nice, how much is it, or it's a good location, or is it not too noisy, or well, how far are we from the subway, things of that kind, you know, or you don't like the decoration, it's a little too dark, everything that goes into looking for a place you have to consider for yourself, and that will be stereotyped, but try to make it, while you are doing it, one apartment, or another, or the next, as much varied as you possibly can. That is, don't make it a

cliche. Start out with something quite different, and let it be followed by something which otherwise you would have done in the first place. How much can you really be different? You see, I'm now talking about the changing of one's mechanicality. We always are, regarding anything we experience, very much apt to follow exactly the same way we always do it; we always solve a certain problem in a certain way in a certain situation which is similar to another situation which we remember, we usually behave in a certain kind of a way. In another way, you might say that I'm always mechanical regarding the different things that I already know, and sometimes the mechanicality becomes habitual because I don't even have to use my head. As far as work is concerned, that which really concerns one and which really has the proper place, of any kind of a task, is that I break this habitual kind of behavior. You see, it comes down to that, realizing that I am mechanical, and mechanicality is a result of my subjectivity, as soon as I try to break it up in some way or other, distort it, or do something out of the way, different, not going in a certain direction in one line, but making a corner orstop or continue in a differnet direction. That is, that I become aware of my mechanicality at a certain time, and then I choose something with my mind instead of letting it go the way it always goes. The reason for this is that when it is anti-mechanical it will cause in me some friction. If it is a very big thing, I call it going against the grain, that is, if it is for any length of time that I have to do something that I really don't want to do, and something that really could upset me because it breaks my habitual pattern of life. In the first place I don't feel at home in it; in the second place, I hate to do something that is a little un-

usual because it almost, you might say, force me to think. Now the question of breaking up this mechanicality, of putting a stop to that, and to something else is to say the least, causeing me t to have some friction. I have to stop and think, and consider, and that might require some energy of a different kind than usual. It is not much af a friction if one is sufficiently flexible, and dependent on one's ability to be flexible, one is able to change the mechanicality a little easier than one who is set and crystallized in his ways. But I think it applies to all of us when we see where we are really mechanical, and go through a performance which is almost you might say I can prescribe how I am going to behave, that then when I happen to think about that even before, then when I want to do something about it, to introduce some kind of an element which is differnet from my usual way of behavior. That when I now do this, has to be linked up by association with the reason why I want to do it, you see, and that is where my emotional energy can be used, because that will require a real wish to continue with it against the grain, or differnt from usual, and that might give me a chance actually to see myself. And by seeing myself, I now mean to become aware even if it is for certain moments only and even if it is extended over the little period that you look at an apartment. But I would almost say there are thousands of opportunities in that where one can change it because the pattern is so completely the same: the entering, the talking to the superintendent or doorman or the agent who sent you, knocking on the aprtment and ringing the bell, or to go up in the elevator, or to wait until the door opens, whatever it may be, you know, there is that usual pattern of that when one leaves now I like it, I don't like it, this is no good, you again

go out of the door, you walk up the street, now where will we go next, all of that becomes a habitual pattern and surely one deals with it mechanically. You understand what I mean? Linking up of one's daily life into little parts, and then to choose what one wants to do, and the reason for choosing that and not the habitual pattern is associated with the wish, that it is for a reason why I do this, let me see if I can be aware of myself. All right?

Q-B I understand this, and I would like to have to report on it next week.

Q-C Mr Nyland, I've been having some difficulty in making work efforts lately. I think it has to do with my motivation, or at least part of my motivation, if you can speak of it that way... I've been experiencing tenseness which is like a physical sensation in my head, a tiredness, and it seems to tie up with an anxiety I have about trying to wake up, which I've begun to notice in some of my efforts...

Mr N If one focuses all one's energy on the wish to wake up, you already forfeit the purpose; if it could stay with the fact that you want to be awake, it will be fairly easy. But usually it's based on something that you don't like the state in which you are and you want to change it. You see, that is one reason; the other is that when one tries to wake up, one is not entirely free from identification with oneself, and that which is supposed to be observation with non-identification still remains identification although one tries to observe it. Aside from the fact that one is very seldom applying it at the same moment when it should be

applied, and this whole problem of simultaneity, it is really a result that one is not free from identification with oneself. As a result, there is a certain friction in oneself of wanting to achieve that which one cannot achieve; and part of that is the wish that I would like to be free from that, and the other is that I cannot give up what holds me. This, you might say, causes in me a certain strain, and very often it becomes a pain, or headache, sometimes a strain of certain muscles, sometimes tenseness, and so forth. Whenever one discovers this, you have to stop working; you must not even think about it if you can, but just forget it. Immediately you should let it be followed by a process of relaxing. Instead of trying to continue to work and, I would say forcing it, you should release it, and then release the totality of your body. I've explained many times how to relax; if what I am doing in ordinary life, or wherever it is that I'm trying to apply these rules of observation, if that will allow me to relax, it is very good; if the activity I'm engaged in will not allow it, I must for the time being forget about work entirely. Don't, don't do anything, just as if you don't know from anything at all, just become an ordinary fellow who is doing this or that for the sake of whatever it may be, earning money or someone is looking at you, whatever it may be, then you become like everybody else. Unconscious. You know? But if there is a possibility of doing a little differently without interfering with your professional work, if this happens to be during such a time, then take the time off to relax, and that will require some time because the disturbance put you already in such a state in which it is difficult to relax. And sometimes you will have to wait quite some time before you can relax even

physically, and even if the physical relaxation is more or less there, that which still goes on with your mind or your feelings particularly when it has to do with something that you did not accomplish, and that when there is a wish, that one really wishes to work, that stays for a long time. So you see the difficulties are increased when one is wanting to work and there is no result, for instance, of you cannot do it. So it also means that one has to allow a little bit more time for that possible relaxation. Well, the more one relaxes, the better condition one is in. If one can really relax at that time with three centers, and it's not theoretical now, I really mean that it can be by telling yourself now, take it easy, now relax, now come, as it were, to yourself; it does not mean that I wake up, but it simply means that the instrument with which I work would be in a better condition. After the relaxation, again, don't do anything at all. Don't think that now you can work. All it has lead to is that you relax; you continue then again in an unconscious state. And only later when the thought of work comes to you again can you attempt it. Adhere to that very strictly because if, right after the relaxation you start to work, you will make it worse. All right? The impression of that which has been caused has to work itself away first, before you can have an open attitude towards work. Don't worry about it; it's quite all right; these tensions are quite, quite usual.

Mr N Yes, Phyllis...Yes, Phyllis...

Q-D I'm not Phyllis.

Mr N Oh, who are you?

Q-D Marsha.

Mr N

Mr N Ah, Marsha. You look like Phyllis.

Q-D Who's Phyllis?

Mr N Good thing you don't know. All right.

Q-D I wanted to talk to you about the task you had given me in regard to my little son, David, a few weeks ago.

Mr N See if you had said that, I wouldn't have said Phyllis. Go ahead.

Q-D You had told me to try to remember when I came home at night that I was his mother. Well, it's been working out very well, andI didn't realize until tonight what the big significance of what you said to me was, and tonight I did. I didn't really know why it was working; I just knew that my attitude was differnt, and that the relationship was changing. I realize that previously I had always thought of our relationship in terms of this is my little boy, this is my son. Never, I don't think I've ever thought of the fact that I am also his mother. Somehow this small, seemingly insignifidant little fact seems to have transferred the feelings I had about the relationship entirely. I think that inwardly the resentment I may have had toward him stopping me from things I wanted to do, and all the responsibility--I think I put the responsibility for the relationship on his shoulders, the blame on his houlders. And somehow thinking of it this way, just the opposite way from what I've always thought of it seems to have just wiped all this out in my mind.

Mr N I would say, isn't it nice.But you see how necessary it is that there are two sides of the coin; and that one stares oneself blind only on one. But it is of much larger application. When one sees a person in a certain way, as a certain form of behavior, one ought to be able to see that person totally, and never judge

by the little phase that you happen to see in the moment. I've said before that if you think of the earth, you don't always think of the earth where it is light; you should also think where it is dark. When you are in the little location that you like of earth, there are many places that you don't like. When there are certain things of a person that are more or less agreeable, there are many sides to a man that are disagreeable. And that real judgement about any person, any relationship, any kind of condition must always include the totality of all such possibilities as are represented by such a person, or by that relationship, or by that kind of condition. Then we can have an open, honest, and all-inclusive judgement, and that is really at the basis of what I suggested; it is not the relationship from myself to someone else; it's the relationship of the other person towards me. And the more I can see now that that which is the relationship includes for that person the totality of his existence, and includes for him when he looks at me the totality of that which I am in all kinds and forms of behavior then you really could have a relationship. If he, in the times you are nice to him, could remember the times when he almost could be ready to cry, then he grows.

Q-D Do you think I should continue the task, Mr Nyland?

MR N Continue. It is good for another two weeks.

Q-E Mr Nyland, I want to report on a task that you gave me to tell stories with my family present...

Mr N How did that work out?

Q-E It was a very good task; I didn't do it in the sense that... I tried to one night, but as soon as I started everybody left,

and the other time, I just couldn't bring myself to do it; I was just too nervous about what they would think. It really brought home this--which is very true of me--doing things in front of other people. And it was valuable because it kept me from falling into the old behavior; the task was very much on my mind, and thinking up the stories, and thinking about the stories was very good.

Mr N How was it on the thinking up of the stories? Are you sufficiently able to do that?

Q-E I don't know; I would say so; I got very excited by the stories; I found that to create a situation was much easier than to create the end of the story.

Mr N Well, the point is this; that whenever you start to create really, you have to see the end already. As you tell a story, more and more the end has to be clear, that what you are telling will lead to that end. It is important in the beginning; afterwards it's not important at all. After one gets a little facility at talking, this facility will help one to turn it any old way. And then, one is a real storyteller, because then you can become dependant on the reaction, to the extent that you understand the reaction, in your audience. And that is very helpful, that one knows where the audience is, and you know, and can read their faces, or sometimes exclamations, and then in accordance with that, you can vary the story in order to carry them along, and then you are sure that your audience will stay with you. You see, in the beginning one has to learn that it has been in one's mind totally and in a unit, and you start telling it. And when one acquires flexibility in telling it and facility, that is, that it is not anymore the choice of words, or that there is no parti-

cular caring what someone else thinks and that you are not, in the ordinary sense self-conscious, then with that added flexibility to turn one way or the other, then you can forget about it, then end. There are people that can talk long, long, sentences, without knowing where it will end, and all the time as they talk and they form the sentences with new words and so forth, it looks as if they go off on a side road, and always they land on their own feet again in the end. A German for instance has that ability that I know of. And it's marvelous. Also a person who writes a book sometimes may not know how it will end, but he has to have facility. If he doesn't know it, he's a fool, and such people should not write. Try it again; see if you can get that kind of facility, and then practice for yourself, even when he is not there, and think about what you might tell, or what seems ...whatever seems to you to be the understanding of his words, you see. And it depends then a great deal on the kind of words you use; without talking down to him you have to be on his level; don't use too many words that cannot have any menaing; it's a trap into which many people fall, because they think that the mind is already adjusted to the ordinary abracadabra out of someone, but of course it has no contact. But if you put it in very simple one or two level words it's much better. So when we start to talk for yourself and the other person is not present, be quite critical about the choice of words that happen to come to you, and let them be in review to see is they move fast, (?) by whoever listens to them.

Q-E Also it seemed that the way the story was told was important; that the story might perhaps be a good one, but if the expression was...

M. N

Mr N There are so many things in telling a story; I've mentioned only a few items like the choice of words or the concept of it; but that which makes a story is the emphasis on certain words, a certain way of rhythm in which you want to speak fast or slow, depending on what they can perceive, and the number of pauses you want to make in order to let it penetrate, and of course the tone of voice and naturally the way one can act sometimes; and the acting has to do with the expression on your face; and it will lead immediately to imitation of character, that is, imitate whoever might be speaking. Of course it's a very common kind of a trick, The Three Bears, "Who has eaten from my plate?" It is hard, but you have to employ it. And there is much more to telling a story in a certain way, particularly if you can afford to be silent; one of the most marvelous things is to see how something starts to penetrate, and then you take it up, you might say, when it returns again. Each impression gets somewhere inside a person; it penetrates and it returns. A superficial impression is gone because it almost reflexes. But that which penetrates takes a little while and then it comes up; again back to the skin as it were, and then the skin, as an expression on the face or tension in the body indicates how much has been digested. At the time when it comes back, the silence has to be over, and you have to catch it. It's interesting if you look at it from the standpoint of music and how to use the pedal, because in music you strike a certain chord or tone and start a rate of vibrations going, and it has a certain volume and sound that starts to go out, as it were, like ripples in water; and at that time when one wants to strike again or put the pedal down, it has to be in relation to the original

chord, and that the sound has to be arranged in such a way that at the time when one wants to strike again and use the pedal, usually using the pedal just before one strikes in order to give, in the second time that one strikes a chord that it enhances the vibration of the original one; it requires a special kind of ear, but it's very, very interesting to see how then the piano--it is easier with a piano but sometimes an organ can do the same thing--not as easily as a piano can--to produce a sound that really sings and sometimes with a piano, the sound can become like an organ sound, quite exceptionally but it is possible. If you play football and someone sends the ball to the goal, you see, at the proper time when it's just about coming down, you hit it again with out its touching the ground. I don't know if you ever played hockey, field hockey; it's the same kind of thing. Someone has the ball and its there and it goes down and it (?), and you give it a second wind, as it were. And it's beautiful because that kind of play does require an understanding, of course, of what is really taking place. And so storytelling is the same.

Q-F Could I have a task?

Mr N Well, you always have to tell what you're doing in daily life.

Q-F Well, I spend about a quarter of the day just walking through New York.

Mr N In connection with business or your profession?

Q-F Occasionally, but in genreal just, you know, walking.

Mr N Yes, but...delivering things?

Q-F No, just walking.

Mr N Just walking for the sake of walking.

You have free time? Oh. Then why not use that time? Do you like to walk? Do you have to walk?

Q-F I find that it's good to...

Mr N Could you do something else? Is walking a result of your laziness?

Q-F Well, I try to use that time to observe myself. I have a job but the job gives me alot of free time.

Mr N Yes, you can walk; do they pay you for walking? No? So, it's your own time. And you can walk from one place to the other; it doesn't matter where you go? You can walk up and down a block? And come back? And walk again, and come back? Yes? Without any purpose, but still walking. When you go back and forth for the second time, could you really be awake? Because its silly, you know? When you go from one block to another, and from sixth amenue to fifth, and then back to sixth avenue, and then you do it again, the second time it's utterly silly to do it. But now it can be for a certain purpose. How much can you be aware when you walk?

Q-F Sometimes, in relation to other times, it seems quite a bit.

Mr N Do you want to try it? Yes? Do you have too much free time? The second time when you walk, can you do it slowly? And then fast? Can you try twenty paces slow and then fast? Without causeing any upheaval in the rest of the street?

Q-F I do lots of things like that anyway.

Mr N Yes, I know; this is now definitely for the purpose of waking up, not that you do it because you like it every one in a while, because that may be accidental; this has to be intentional. And you have to do it at a time when you don't feel like it. It's a little different, because when you give yourself a command,

instead of letting it take place accidently, something is in the saddle, in command, and it is exactly that you follow that kind of instruction from something that you give the power to be in charge. You see, it's a different thing. Otherwise it becomes haphazard, All right, could you do that, back and forth, and then the third time--you should do it three times--you can really walk all by yourself any way you wish, but you have to try to maintain being awake which of course is very difficult, because all the time you will be identified with whatever you see and whatever you hear. So, it really does require at that time a very special kind of an effort. Try to do this once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Q-F Set a period once in the morning and once in the afternoon?

MMr N Can you do it? And you want to do it?

Q-F Yes, I do.

Mr N Good,

Q-G I have a problem about getting serious about anything...

Mr N You're not un-serious now. You're very serious now.

Q-G I think I'm serious about trying to become serious.

Mr N So, you said you had a problem about becoming serious about anything.

Q-G Except for like a certain period of time, and then, all of a sudden it doesn't have the same effect on me...

Mr N How long does it take before it becomes less ...

Q-G It depends. It's like I get caught up in something like playing a piece of music, and then if I have difficulty with it, it puts me off...

Mr N Wait a minute. That's not a question of seriousness; it8s

a question of exhaustion of energy. It is a lack of interest; after something goes wrong, then you lose energy.

Q-G I don't try.

Mr N That is in accordance with the law of the octaves. It's a very ordinary, natural phenomenon. And you're not alond; everyone knows it. It's not a question of seriousness; only the result is that you become less and less interested. You think it's seriousness; it's because the energy has drained out.

Q-G It's like, Mr Nyland, my intention, the attitude I have toward becoming a musician is serious sometimes, and not other times, and I don't feel...

Mr N Remember do re me? Do strikes a note of interest; you go for a littel while through re and mi; then you lose that interest at a certain time and it goes back to do. And that the variation do re mi, mi re do is simply an indication of your state. At times you really feel that you can do this, and at times you have lost it and you're back again in do. And you have to wait until a new do is struck. And it may be under a variety of different conditions that all of a sudden you feel yourself back again with new vigor wanting to do something. But you see the lack of interest is a little different; when I try to regain my original do, it is simply that other things have taken place that overshadow my initial interest in music. But when I reach the place where my interest is gone and stays gone for a little while, then I'm at mi trying to go across fa; it's a different thing; because this I cannot really solve by myself; I can wait and go back to do, I again start striking do re mi, and I return. But when I'm at fa, I wish I could continue, and at times I'm certain that the wish is there only I cannot do it. Now it is

necessary to change the conditions in which you have such an experience of wishing to continue. With other words, one looks for an outside force, a shock; where the outside shock comes from or how you recognize an outside shock for me of course is a question of how I am inside. And it's a realization of the total accomplishment as indicated by si do which puts me in a certain state where I becomesreceptive to the receiving of an outside shock. It is much more that I create this kind of condition for myself in order then by means of the outside shock, to be helped across fa. In order to find it, I'd like differnt conditions in which I happen to think about music: my ambition, my wish to become a good whatever--teacher, accompanist, performer, or music for its own sake, or music that you want to accomplish, that you want to give to the rest of the world, or that you feel you have the task regarding yourself, to say it in a very strange way, to play the heart--you see, it may be that there is something of that kind in one that one really wishes, and it may be the aim to play music of a certain kind, not for one's own self satisfaction, but for the accomplishment of something. In different conditions, in different points of life, in different relationships with different people, early in the morning, during the morning, at noon, during the afternoon, evenig, while you eat, while you are listening to somebody talk, while you are going to the movies, while you are going in the subway, when you are talking to friends, sometimes in the midst of a telephone conversation--what is my attitude towards music ? You ask yourself; you ask yourself this question many times in a variety of ordinary conditions of life. Unconscious, quite right, unconscious, you ask, but keep on introducing it each

time, so that each time now you have a recollection that you approach the question now from a different standpoint. Out of that totality of this kind of endeavor, you will digest something and extract something ultimately that is an understanding why you want to, that is really you, and you create conditions that you will do it. You understand the procedure?

Q-G Yes. May I report on a task? Four weeks ago was the last time that I could come to a Monday meeting, and you asked me to, while I was waiting to run a commercial on television, to stare, and to be occupied in this staring to the extent that everyone around me would say oh, he's staring again, he's out, in another world, and yet inside, to try to be awake. And I tried this, and I felt very separated from everything around me inside, because people around me used to like follow my direction to see what I'm looking at, and I felt very alone; that is, everything that was around me, that hysteria that is constant in the atmosphere where I work, I tried to get out of it. And I did a little bit; there was some calm inside me. Then the command came to roll the commercial, and I was in that again. At certain times I felt that was, and at certain times it didn't have any effect on me because I was tense with the expectation of having to roll on cue. But I found at certain times a separateness...

Mr N Were you afraid of it?

Q-G I am, I think. There were certain times when I tried observing myself, and I in a sense, can look at myself from outside and I fell kind of, fear. Fear of being out.

Mr N At the same time, when the command comes to roll the com-

mercial, it's there, isn't it? So you really don't have to have any fear; the fear is only based on the rareity of it, and the unusalness. You are not familiar with it; you are not as yet at home, and that is why you are afarid, but the more you put your foot in the water, first the toes and then a little bit more of the foot, gradually you will become acquainted with a new kind of a country. The more adventurous you get to be, soon, you might say, it will be over. So don't have any fear particularly when you can come back into ordinary life and only having the thought. The fact of being alone is right; as a matter of fact one is, at times, completely separated from the rest of the world; one lives somewhere else; the rest of the world continues. Sometimes one is really a little ashamed that you came from this world to that world. Sometimes you are critical about what you are seeing. Sometimes you are sorry that they are there and you are somewhere else; of course the last part, that you feel that you have something that they don't might lead to a little form of conceit, but I don't think you have to worry too much about it. The fadt remains that you experience something that they don't, and perhaps they could but they don't, and they are not interested, but you are. What counts is your interest; lonesomeness doesn't matter too much; it is far better than being affected by alot of things that they are interested in, which are not going to buy them any bread in the real sense of the word. It may be necessary to associate with them in order to get a couple of dollars, but the real life of oneself is something that you need not communicate to others, and you need not be understood by others. It is the understanding of one that that which really is you, you know for sure it is you, and that will not give you

lonesomeness, if you are sure. I say it is good, because it will ultimately give you something which is your own, and to which you could withdraw when the outside world is a little bit too difficult to take. I would say continue, at least for another week, exactly the same way. It probably will be more successful; I think you are going to have more realizations of being alone and also more realizations of being much more real. All right? Good.

Q-H Mr Nyland, this Summer is past and my task has ended because the wells have run dry, as it were.

Mr N But is it finished?

Q-H Yes, it's finished.

Mr N I mean there's no water now?

Q-H There's no need for water now in Long Island.

Mr N So the kind of work is finished.

Q-H And I have more time on my hands than usual, and a lot of it is very confused of course, and I was sitting at my desk the other night, and thinking about a certain person in which I have a kind of conflicting relationship which lead to much friction. And I began to reflect upon the things that were happening all in a very subjective and critical way, of course, and as I did my emotions began to take hold and capture me, and I began to experience uneasiness of a very deep order.

Mr N Why uneasy?

Q-H Well, like my senses were out of kilter. My body was one place, my mind was somewhere else, and my emotions were someplace else. It was just...

Mr N Now wait now. Don't let's... Elucidate a little bit

better. You r body was there, wasn't it? The emotions were in the body? And the mind was there? Did the body speak?

Q-H That's it. Now just...Yes, something happened, A strange thing happened. As I began to think about it, suddenly a totality happened for a moment, a brief moment, mind you, in which I understood in which I understood what my relationship was; it was only a moment, and I sang silently for a moment. Suddenly it slipped a way, and the little eye that was watching kept watching me go back to before I was very elated.

Mr N Oh, Marcus, I already lost you. You sang silently? That's already something that is difficult; then the little eye watching you, and telling you already to go back. Isn't that a little halucinatory.

Q-H This is what I thought. Right after it left me, I experienced physical pain in my chest, and my stomach, a sinking feeling, an emptiness, and this is why I mention it now. It seemed to go through a strange evolvement for me. And the pains got to be very critical for me, and I screamed to myself STOP. You said something about relaxing and letting it go, and I sopped, but there was emptiness which gripped me, after I had experi - enced the totality of understanding for a brief moment, I'm not saying it lasted or what; but this person in whom this conflict and this friction had been taking place, suddenly took a perspective in me in which the totality of me understood the totality of that person and there was no blame, nowhere, but I lost it, and in that moment of loss, I also took inside me a physical manifestation of pain which was very real, and not halucinatory.

Mr N No, no. Only when you thought it was the little I am I

afraid it was a little halucinatory

Q-H Well, let's say I sensed something watching, I call it my little I.

Mr N OK. Good. Let's say that for one moment you felt that something was there watching you. Now. What?

Q-H Well, the point is if I had this one moment and it was real, how can I extent it?

Q-H Yes. That's what we're all after. That's why we go into halucination, hoping it will be there. Get your feet on the ground, Marcus. If it does happen as an experience, one simply says, How wonderful; it happened; or it may be a result of all kinds of thinking, or all kinds of suffering because of conditions, my side and this and that, or something produced it, or it may even be a result of thinking about the possibility of work, out of which certain conditions were formed more or less in line with work, or even, I would say that at one moment, seein myself for what I am, I saw that which I am, impartially, for one moment. But then it goes, and then I wish it back, and I try to describe now, for myself, what I wish, that is, that kind of state in which I was released of certain things in which there was more understanding. At that time I try to describe it in some way, how it ought to be, and it will never come back.

Q-H It'll never come back.

Mr N Not that way. It comes back as a state of awakening. And it may be that in that state of awakening that I can again afterwards describe what my experience was.

Q-H I can't forget it; I remember it.

Mr N Of course. You won't have to forget it. You can be grateful that you had it. And now we will start work.

Q-H Yes, you see...

Mr N Go ahead now. Very simple work, without ahy thought of what you have reached or what accidently happened.

Q-H But where do I work now? I have no task.

Mr N You mean to say you have to wait for a task?

Q-H No, I don't; I do things, but I feel stronger...

Mr N Last week, I explained to you what work was. Have you done it?

Q-H I think that this was an outcome.

Mr N No. I don't think so.

Q-H You don't?

Mr N No. You can convince me if you like.

Q-H I wouldn't try to convince you.

Mr N Yes, try. Because I would like to see it as a result of the attempts you did at work. Now, let's say that you know what work is, when did you happen to work?

Q-H If I would be honest with myself and you as well, I would say that I try to work almost everyday. And by work, I will try to clarify what I mean so that there's no misunderstanding in what I'm saying. I wake up in the morning and instead of being tired, I'm not tired. I sing, I whistle, I open the window, I make a fresh cup of coffee, I try not to think of what the day will hold for me, or what are the negative aspects of the day, or the positive aspects of the day; I try to accept it in that moment in the morning completely selfishly as a matter of fact, you could say, so that I could go into the day inkkeeping with the things that you said about the sun coming up and, you know, going. It doesn't always work that way of course, because something always enters into it, but I try to observe this thing

that I am trying to do. Now, it's not thinking; it's an actual doing, but then suddenly the day starts to capture me and gets a grip on me, and I forget all those things that happened in the morning.

Mr N Let us stick to the morning and try to analyze at what moment do you think you make an effort?

Q-H The minute I wake up; when I open my eyes...

Mr N What is the effort?

Q-H What is the effort? To get out of bed and be glad I'm alive.

Mr N Is that an effort?

Q-H Oh, I think so.

Mr N Is that an objective effort? Really objective, that is, impartial, that is, an observation of your body. Is there something that at the moment you get out of bed, watching you get out of bed? Watching the body? You can prove it to yourself tomorrow; I cannot check up on you.

Q-H I know you can't but as I say, you must take my word for it; there is something saying, Here goes Marcus getting out of bed.

Mr N Yes. And is that something that is saying that impartial about Marcus?

Q-H Yes, you see, Marcus doesn't like himself as we all know. But this guy doesn't hate Marcus who says Here goes Marcus getting out of bed.

Mr N Well, as long as it is that saying Here goes Marcus getting out of bed, I would even prefer that it says there goes It getting out of bed.

Q-H It is better, yes.

Mr N Yes? Well, now you say that?

Q-H No, I'm not saying it yet,

Q-H No, I'm not saying it yet, but I will.

Mr N But you will? And you will have I say this?

Q-H I will have I say this.

Mr N Yes? And I then being impartial about it? And I following your movements? You will try that?

Q-H I sure will.

Mr N Good. Then that is the task.

Q-H That is my task.

Mr N Yes. All the rest is embellishment.

Q-H But now, you see, when you give me a task, I say to myself, Mr Nyland has given me a task and it concerns the moring; my task doens't end because Mr Nyland says it concerns the morning; my task continues on throughtthe whole day.

Mr N It's all right. Go ahead.

Q-H Well...

Mr N How?

Q-H Yes.

Mr N Didn't I tell you to do it at breakfast? And when you go to the bathroom? and when you meet a friend, or take the subway, I could tell all these things.

Q-H There goes it?

Mr N I don't know, does it?

Q-H Well, evidently it must...

Mr N Sure it knows it; but who besides it knows it?

Q-H I see; I get the point.

Mr N Yes? I thought you got it last time too. This time I hope you get it.

Q-H Well, you know how it is, Mr Nyland...

Mr N I know. OK?

Q-H That's my task?

Mr N Yes. All right. Good.

Q-I I did my task, and it's brought up anumber of questions in my mind of things that happened. One of them was that it seems that I was renigging on the task very easily, within a day or so, and then it became something that I have to do, and I didn't like feeling that way about it. So one day I didn't do it at the exact time, instead I listened to one of your records.

Mr N It's not the same, is it?

Q-I What do you mean, it's not the same?

Mr N Well, doing the task, or listening to one of my...

Q-I No, I know, I did it later. I did it a half an hour later, because I listened to the record and the record made me feel better about doing it.

Mr N I see, you didn't do it at that time, but you did it at a time when you were in a better state.

Q-I But that also made me wonder whether it's necessary...I mean, when a task is given, how close do you have to come?

Mr N It all depends on the task. If a task is given for ten o' clock, it is ten o'clock.

Q-I Because another time when I was trying to do it, my sister decided she was going to cleam. And i couldn't do it when she...

Mr N That's just it, you see, you're confronted with something that's impossible. And the task is still that it has to be possible. Now maybe that there is such a time when it is utterly impossible. But it will be a long time before really it becomes utterly impossible. If it is ten o'clock, if that's the hour, it doesn't make any difference who or what, as they say, come

hell or high water. It all depends how much you will accept as an excuse. You see, with your sister or whatever, it is a little bit of excuse me, and maybe you get out of her way. You know if a person goes to bed at ten thirty, and it may be that there are other people around and a party, and so forth, he goes to bed at ten thirty. I remember I had to tell stories to the children when they went to bed; I didn't care who was there, I told the children a story. My great-great grandfather may have been there, and it may have been in the middle of a conversation or an argument in which I was gaining... I don't take no for an answer; when I once say yes, it is yes. When I say yes to a task, it is the task. So I cannot put water in the wine. It is either that or this, if that is the task. But if I cannot do that kind of a task, I would say plus or minus, approximately, one minute before ten, one minute after, I call then ten o'clock an average. It all depends how much margin I will allow. It all depends what I know of myself. You see, if it is included in the task, then I must do it. If I cannot do it, don't include it. Make another task. Today between five minutes to ten and ten minutes after ten, I will remember myself at some time, and that's all to the task. Surely it's not dependent on that exact time that I want to wake up; one minute after ten would be just as good; it all depends what I tell myself. A promise is a promise, you see, and it cannot be changed when it is a promise. And if I cannot do it, as I say, I don't make the promise.

Q-I I have trouble doing it...;

Mr N Yes, yes, yes, I know. That is why I chose the task; that is exactly it. You think it is just as good; it isn't, not from the standpoint of doing the task. From the standpoint of being

awake, every moment is as good as any other moment. But I'm not hitting at every moment; I cannot, so I cannot even use that as an excuse. I have to attach it to something that for me becomes my master. That master tells me that I have to do the task, so I submit. You see, if I don't do that, if I don't learn that kind of respect, that kind of allowing something to become my god, I will never have a God. I will always be a little wishy-washy about my god. I will never understand what it is to have a oneness when I allow myself to go a number of different directions. So it is in order to get a concept in me that what is truth is truth, it is nothing else. You see, for me, then, it becomes paramount. Right? It is almost, I would say, at the expense of my life. You see. We have to learn it. When it says in the Bible that your yea is yea and your no is no, that is right. No maybe, no compromise. Again I say, it is in relation to a task. There is a great deal of compromise in life, and many times I say, Yes, I know, I should do that, but I cannot; when all the factors are considered and I come to the conclusion that it is impossible; it is not that kind of a compromise with myself; it is a compromise with conditions over which I have no control. Then you see, it's a different kind of a principle. But when it's a task, it's my own; when I choose it, it becomes my own, then it is over. You are going to teach this coming week?

Q-I Yes...

Mr M All right. Good, we still have this week, then?

Q-I Yes, and even next week. (?)

Mr M Good, well then, you must do it for this week. OK.

We're almost at the end then. Who is now late? You didn't have

your arm up before?

Q-J I just decided. I'd like a task.

Mr N You'd like a task? The task is to put your arm up first time next week.

Q-J And then what'll be the task?

Mr N Then what will be the task?

Q-J What should I do after I put my arm up?

Mr N Ask for a task. No, I think what the task will be this week before you put your arm up is to relate what kind of attempts you will make this week in trying to wake up, that you give an honest account, day by day, of the times you consider worthwhile to talk about; that it really means that there is an attempt as a result of a thought or a feeling, that you make an effort, and that you could describe at such and such a time I did remember myself and it was like this, and it gave me a certain whatever it may be,; it may have given you insight, it may have given you an experience, it may produce something indelibly engraved in you, whatever it may be, at least you became aware of yourself. At least let's say two times for each day that you could relate under what condtions, where you were, how you were, and that you followed it up, the idea that came to you about work, that you actually worked. It's a good task. All right?

So now, remember what I said in the beginning, that I really mean it. But that the meaning for that is for you, and it will help you tobbecome serious. And unless you are serious, work has no meaning whatsoever. You can read as much as you like, ALL AND EVERYTHING included; after you put the book on the shelf, it is very easy to forget. And Gurdjieff did not live for that purpose. So

So if you value him as a remarkable man, it has to become apparant in you how you digest that remarkability. So I'll see you next week. Good night, everybody.